

NOTES FOR PUBLIC UTTERANCES ON
CIA FUNCTIONS

(Preliminary Comments)

Public statements about CIA will fall in three general categories: (1) those to the general public, (2) those to uncleared groups who have, however, intelligence training and special interest, and (3) cleared groups who have a considerable amount of intelligence knowledge. While the basic thoughts on CIA functions will ^{new} run to the same line in all three cases, the speaker will be faced with very different problems. With the general public it is purely an information problem based on the assumption that the ordinary person has barely heard of CIA. Intelligence groups, such as reserve units, probably will be more interested in techniques and distribution of functions. The highly cleared groups, such as the War College, know a considerable amount and are interested in more specific problems and operations. Consequently, any outline must be completely flexible to meet the audience before it and the following notes are based on the approach to the uninformed public and are, in effect, an outline rather than a speech.

- I. (The introduction will vary in each instance and no suggestions are offered, except that it be short and pertinent to the audience addressed.)
- II. The Idea of Intelligence.

There is no great mystery about intelligence despite some of the ideas put forth by so-called experts. Basically it is a matter of common sense. An analogous function which is familiar to everyone is performed by the judicial system. The courts, the judges, the juries and the lawyers primary purpose is to elicit all available pertinent information in an attempt to settle finally matters of discord throughout society, but there are two important distinctions between this function and that of intelligence.

The courts take the facts as gathered and apply to them the learning and precedents of centuries in order to come to a conclusion. The courts, therefore, are looking backward. Intelligence considers all available pertinent information in order to interpret the facts as indications of future events or trends. Intelligence applies the experience of the past, but is looking to the future. Secondly, the

courts have, over hundreds of years, evolved an elaborate system for acquiring, appraising and applying information. Intelligence, at least in this country, has developed no such mechanism until recently and our problem is, therefore, one largely of methodology and technique.

III. History of Intelligence

Not that intelligence is anything new in American history, the Colonies had some pretty good intelligence operated rather informally by private individuals. The Revolutionary War was a field day for informers and it was mainly a problem of who to trust for Washington staff. The British apparently had not reached their present expertness inasmuch as the British fleet was at one time ordered to sail up the Bronx River to White Plains although the maximum depth of water was two feet for the main length of the river. The War of 1812 has its intelligence stories, and the Civil War, of course, is famous for its ~~spies~~ stories.

Most of this was military intelligence, but all the while was growing the acquisition facility of the diplomatic arm of the government. More and more American ambassadors, ministers and consuls were being sent out through the world and each became an intelligence collecting and forwarding agency in himself. With him were the military attaches who reported to their departments on military and technical matters and also on matters of general interest.

By the first world war, the government in Washington was beginning to have information sufficient to keep it reasonably well informed. When wartime came along, ~~we~~ ^{however,} we had no intelligence adequate to cope with the emergency situation. Consequently, during that war we had to depend heavily on the British, French and other services. In peacetime we went back to the pre-World War I system where masses of information poured into the separate desks of the State Department, and into the Army and Navy from their representatives. People dealing with any one area or problem could find a great deal of information, but to a large extent there was compartmentation and very little inclination to break down the barriers. The top levels, ~~of course,~~ could call on various departments, but there was no assurance that there would be proper coordination of all sources of information or any intelligence synthesis of what information was brought together.

Pearl Harbor, ~~was,~~ of course, the catastrophe which not only brought war, but broke the weak back of the intelligence structure. As it later appeared, there was a great deal of information about Japanese

activities and intentions, but there was no means to assure that the information reached the policy planners in the orderly current manner necessary to cohesive thinking and planning.

In 1941, President Roosevelt ~~named Colonel (later General) Donovan~~ ^{created the Office of} as Coordinator of Information. Later this Agency was broken into OWI and OSS. OSS was by no means a central intelligence coordinating activity. In the first place, it was under the Joint Chiefs who had their own Joint Intelligence Staff for their planning, and OSS had only liaison relations with the Department of State. It did, however, contain the germ of a central activity and a plan was actually drawn up in 1942 which was very similar to the present organization. At the end of the war OSS was disbanded, but by this time the idea of a central agency was firmly fixed.

In January 1946, President Truman issued a directive creating the Central Intelligence Group to operate under the direction of the National Intelligence Authority. This Authority was composed of the Secretaries of State, War and Navy, and the President's personal representative who was then Admiral Leahy. CIG was intended to be a small group of top-level intelligence experts who would synthesize the products of the various departmental intelligence agencies. It would be composed of people loaned by the various agencies themselves and would have no independent organization or status. By the end of the first year, experience had already shown the difficulty of operating by dependence on other agencies and the concept was changing to a more positive approach in the field of national estimates.

Discussion of the proper role for CIG continued in parallel with the controversy of the unification of the Services. Finally the National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense, and at the same time established the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency. As far as CIA was concerned, the National Security Council took over generally the functions of the old National Intelligence Authority, and CIA, as an ~~intelligence~~ ^{information} Executive agency, was assigned certain functions to perform under the direction of the National Security Council.

IV. Functions of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The National Security Act assigned the following specific functions to the Central Intelligence Agency:

1. To advise the National Security Council in matters concerning such intelligence activities as relate to national security;
2. To make recommendations to the National Security Council with the coordination of such intelligence activities;
3. To correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national

security and to provide for appropriate dissemination of such intelligence within the government;

4. To perform services of common concern for the benefit of existing intelligence agencies, and

5. To perform such other functions and duties related to intelligence as the National Security Council may from time to time direct.

All of these, of course, require direction from the National Security Council, but there are three provisos which are absolute in the Act. One states that the Agency shall have no police, subpoena, law enforcement powers or internal security functions. This proviso serves the dual purpose of ensuring that CIA will not encroach on the internal security prerogative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and, secondly, will not have police powers which could lead to the growth of a Gestapo.

The second proviso ensures that the departments and agencies shall continue to collect, evaluate, correlate and disseminate departmental intelligence. Obviously, the departments and agencies, particularly the military and the Department of State, ~~must~~ have specialized needs for intelligence in order to adequately perform their functions. It was never felt that one central agency could service all these needs and any attempt to put all intelligence in one package would provide endless confusion and poor service.

The third proviso places on the Director of CIA the responsibility for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. This is a heavy burden, particularly in view of the American tradition of free speech on all aspects of governmental activities. There is an inevitable conflict between security of operations and the principle of free speech, but since the whole purpose of CIA is to assist in safeguarding such principles, it can only attempt to reach a balance between secrecy of intelligence sources and method and proper informing of the public.

~~All of the functions assigned to CIA are important, but the heart of the matter, for which all the other functions are merely necessary supports, is the duty to correlate, evaluate and disseminate intelligence relating to the national security. Thereby the Central Intelligence Agency is given the responsibility of seeing to it that the United States has adequate central machinery for the examination and interpretation of intelligence so that the national security will not again be jeopardized by failure to coordinate the intelligence opinion in the country based on all available information.~~

V. Functions of the Central Intelligence Agency

The nature of certain of the above-stated functions are obvious. In its duty to advise the National Security Council, CIA should bring to the Council's attention such matters as obvious gaps in the intelligence structure, unnecessary duplication, or other special conditions which might require Council action. The duty to recommend follows the advisory one and, of course, requires the Central Intelligence Agency to present a solution to problems arising in the intelligence field. The duty to perform services of common concern for the benefit of the other intelligence agencies is a logical assignment in the interest of economy and efficiency of such operations as foreign broadcast monitoring, the exploitation of foreign documents and certain reference services which are used by all the agencies. The responsibility for performing such other duties and functions relating to the national security as the Council may direct is merely a catch-all recognition that there are many problems arising in connection with the acquisition and coordination of intelligence information which may require centralized control and authority.

All of these functions are important, but the heart of the matter, for which all other functions are merely necessary supports, is the duty to evaluate, correlate and disseminate intelligence relating to the national security. Thereby the Central Intelligence Agency is given the responsibility of seeing to it that the United States has adequate central machinery for the examination and interpretation of intelligence so that the national security will not again be jeopardized by failure to coordinate the best intelligence opinion in the country based on all available information. This requires the coordination of intelligence opinion in the form of reports or estimates affecting, generally, the national security as a whole.

The Act apparently gives the Central Intelligence Agency the independent right of producing national intelligence. As a practical matter, such estimates can be written only with the collaboration of experts in many fields of intelligence and with the cooperation of several departments and agencies of the Government. A national intelligence report or estimate as assembled and produced by the Central Intelligence Agency should reflect the coordination of the best intelligence opinion, based on all available information. It should deal with topics of wide scope relevant to the determination of basic policy, such as the assessment of a country's war potential, its preparedness for war, its strategic capabilities and intentions, its vulnerability to various forms of direct attack or indirect pressures. An intelligence estimate of such scope would go beyond the competence of any single Department or Agency of the Government. A major objective, then, in establishing the Central Intelligence Agency was to provide the administrative machinery for the coordination

of intelligence opinion, for its assembly and review, objectively and impartially, and for its expression in the form of estimates of national scope and importance.

The concept of national intelligence estimates underlying the statute is that of an authoritative interpretation and appraisal that will serve as a firm guide to policy-makers and planners. A national intelligence estimate should reflect the coordination of the best intelligence opinion, with notation of and reasons for dissent in the instances when there is not unanimity. It should be based on all available information and be prepared with full knowledge of our own plans and in the light of our own policy requirements. The estimate should be compiled and assembled centrally by an agency whose objectivity and disinterestedness are not open to question. Its ultimate approval should rest upon the collective judgment of the highest officials in the various intelligence agencies. Finally, it should command recognition and respect throughout the Government as the best available and presumably the most authoritative intelligence estimate.

VI. Inter-Agency Relationships.

In the performance of its functions, it is most important to understand clearly the relationship of the Central Intelligence Agency to the departmental intelligence agencies. It should be noted that in the Act the Central Intelligence Agency may only recommend on coordination of intelligence activities to the National Security Council but cannot coordinate on its own authority. This statutory limitation, leaving the final coordination determination in the National Security Council, is designed to protect the ^{autonomy} ~~independence~~ of the internal departments and agencies performing intelligence functions. The Secretaries of the departments who are members of the National Security Council are in a position to review recommendations of the Central Intelligence Agency concerning the other departments and, consequently, may have all sides of the matter heard in Council meetings.

In spite of this limitation, however, it is clear that the Central Intelligence Agency is expected to provide the initiative and leadership in developing a coordinated intelligence system. Actually the Central Intelligence Agency and the departmental agencies are inter-dependent and must support each other fully for the effective accomplishment of their missions.

The Act apparently gives the Central Intelligence Agency the independent right for producing national intelligence. As a practical matter, such estimates can be written only with the collaboration of experts in many fields and with the cooperation of several departments and agencies of the government.

The Central Intelligence Agency must be staffed with personnel of outstanding caliber to provide the intelligent analysis and imagination required for national estimates, but it must also encourage the other agencies to build up their intelligence sections as career assignments which will attract the best minds available, for able leadership and strong initiative from CIA, combined with willing cooperation of well equipped departmental agencies, ~~is~~^{are} the best assurance that the policy planners of our government will be properly informed to handle the many important problems so closely tied up with our national interest.